

# MI-CRE 2025 Annual Research Symposium and Policy Forum

## *Medicine Shortages in Australia: Research Driving Public Discourse*

**Investigators:** Janetzki, J.<sup>1</sup>, Luong, C.H.<sup>1</sup>, Kalisch Ellett, L.<sup>1</sup>, Pratt, N.<sup>1</sup>

**Author Affiliations:**

<sup>1</sup>Quality Use of Medicines and Pharmacy Research Centre, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA

**Presenter's email address:** jack.janetzki@unisa.edu.au

**Disclosure of Interests Statement:** Nicole Pratt is a member of DUSC

**Is the presenter an HDR student?** No

**Has this research been submitted or presented elsewhere? If so where and when?** Multiple manuscripts have been presented at national conferences in both oral and poster format. The impact of this research has not been presented before.

### Abstract

**Research Problem and Motivation:** Medicine shortages are an ongoing and escalating threat to medicine access and health system stability in Australia. Despite increasing reports of disrupted medicine supply, limited research has explored the impact of shortages on medicine use, clinical practice, or policy. Our program of work was motivated by the need to quantify these impacts and elevate medicine shortages as a national health and policy concern.

**Research Conducted:** Across multiple projects, we examined the impact of medicine shortages using PBS dispensing data. These studies spanned therapeutic areas including menopausal hormone therapy (MHT), HIV (antiretrovirals) and ADHD (lisdexamfetamine). We identified changes in medicine use and substitution patterns during shortage periods, medicine switching, delays in initiation, and delays in approval of overseas registered products. A prior survey also captured frontline pharmacist experiences and perspectives, highlighting practical impacts. All findings were published in peer-reviewed journals or have been submitted for peer-review, with several achieving national media coverage.

**Impact Pathway:** The University of South Australia initiated a media release on behalf of our initial pharmacist survey of shortages. From here, there were multiple media releases and social media discourse relating to our findings. We also pitched the topic to The Conversation.

**Research Impact:** The research has generated national media attention, helping shape public understanding of medicine shortages as a systemic rather than isolated issue. Media coverage across major outlets such as three national news segments has led to increased engagement from the public. The initial media coverage reached an audience of > 590,000 people, 26 media mentions worth an ASR of almost \$350,000. Jack has completed six live media interviews on the topic. The work has contributed to public and professional calls for supply chain improvements, improved transparency in relation to reporting about shortages, and stronger support for pharmacists. We anticipate further impact as medicine supply remains a national priority.